DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 390 080 CS 509 088

AUTHOR Lindner, Rick
TITLE Of, By and For Speech Teaching Assistants (All Others Are Also Invited).
PUB DATE Nov 95
NOTE 5p.; Workshop presented at the Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Association (81st, San Antonio, TX, November 18-21, 1995).
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Class Activities; *Communication Apprehension; Higher Education; *Instructional Innovation; Persuasive Discourse; *Public Speaking; Student Participation; Teacher Student Relationship; *Teaching Assistants; Teaching Methods; Undergraduate Students
IDENTIFIERS *Communication Strategies

ABSTRACT

This workshop provides a number of teaching suggestions for graduate teaching assistants and parttime instructors to use in public speaking classes. The workshop outlines some first day activities, offers tactics and techniques that can be used throughout the quarter, and presents a potpourri of class exercises. Some first-day activities suggested in the paper are for the instructor to: (1) arrive early; (2) address nervousness ("icebreakers" are helpful); and (3) offer constructive feedback to students. Throughout the quarter, the workshop suggests having visualization sessions and providing positive and helpful instructor evaluations. In the "potpourri" section, the workshop includes exercises in brainstorming, "Guesstures" a Milton Bradley game similar to charades, impromptu speeches, a drawing exercise, a yellow pages exercise, and a vocal variety exercise. (TB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

Rick Lindner
Georgia State University
Phone: 770-936-8844 E-Mail: Hkcu16a@prodigy.com

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
R Lindner
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC).

ED 390 080

OF, BY AND FOR SPEECH TEACHING ASSISTANTS

(All others are also invited)

Overview

The purpose of this workshop is to provide some techniques that teaching assistants as well as part time instructors could apply to help make basic public speaking classes more enjoyable and informative to students. In this workshop, I plan to discuss and/or demonstrate a variety of ideas that are: a) Utilized in my speech lab sections or b) Other interesting techniques learned through articles or discussions with professors (but, I haven't had the opportunity to utilize in my sections). **Please note the following points:**

1. Attendees of the workshop are not expected to utilize all the discussed techniques. They are merely welcomed to use any of the ideas that they would like to try in their speech classes.
2. This workshop is not designed to be a heavily research oriented session (where all sorts of qualitative or quantitative methodologies are discussed). Rather, this will be a fun, relaxed, entertaining and informative seminar in which some interesting ideas/techniques would be shared with the attendees.
3. The number of covered techniques will depend upon my allotted time.

This submission includes the first day's activities, tactics used throughout the quarter, and exercises regarding various areas of public speaking.

The First Day's Activities

Arrive Early- I arrive at least fifteen minutes early. This enables me to meet the early students and have a few "friendly" faces in the crowd at the beginning of class. In addition, students see that a human being is teaching the class (instead of the monster pictured by students if the instructor has yet to enter the room).

Addressing Nervousness- The first issue that I address. I reassure each of my students that he/she isn't the only person who experiences "stage fright". Through realizing that practically everybody else in the class has a fear of public speaking, each student feels more comfortable about the course.

Constructive Student Feedback- During the first class, I emphasize that audience comments about particular speakers are welcome after each round of speeches. However, students are forbidden from giving demeaning remarks. After all, they certainly would not appreciate such comments about their speeches. When put in these terms, students are very cooperative in giving feedback.

CS 509088

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Icebreakers- A recommended approach to prevent the increase of communication anxiety. Examples of icebreakers include the following:

1. Getting to know you- Students give an impromptu on such personal information as their major, hobbies, career goals, and something positive that occurred in their lives.

2. Getting to know them- students briefly meet with a classmate in order to learn a few facts regarding the other person's life. At that point, each student introduces that person and shares the previously discussed facts.

3. Getting to know them later- (from the book Great Ideas for Teaching Speech by Raymond Bud Zeuschner). This is very similar to icebreaker number 2, except the student imagines that he/she is introducing the other person at a special occasion taking place fifteen years from now.

Prizes- Everybody likes acknowledgment after performing difficult tasks. My students are no exception to this rule. After each participant delivers an impromptu or prepared speech, I reward that person with a piece of candy. Candy is somewhat inexpensive (a large bag of generic assorted candy could be purchased at your local discount store for one or two dollars), makes the class more enjoyable and leaves the student with a better feeling about the experience as well as the accomplishment. In class, I refer to candy as "prizes" to sound like a larger incentive.

I especially recommend prizes suited to special occasions (Halloween candy-corn, Valentine's Day M&M's etc.).

Remember to reward your students throughout the entire term. Otherwise, **everybody** will ask "Where's the prize?" (I learned this from personal experience!!).

Tactics Used Throughout The Quarter

Opening Ceremonies- No, it's not really a ceremony, but I often start classes with a brief, light hearted diversion to help my students feel better about the upcoming session. For example, we'll partake in a brief discussion about an interesting topic (for example, "Beverly Hills, 90210" and "Melrose Place" are popular among my students). This conversation encourages students to speak up in class (even if it's only a few words), and feel a bit more comfortable about the course.

A good alternative to a class discussion is to share something humorous with my class. For example, I occasionally read funny articles or show comic strips to the students.

Visualization Sessions- Many consider visualization as an important step towards accomplishing a feat. Prior to each round of speeches, I spend a few minutes instructing the class to visualize themselves delivering topnotch speeches. As I mention the speech juncture to visualize (Introduction, body or conclusion), I also suggest successful delivery of other public speaking elements (Eye contact, gestures, vocal variety etc.) to picture. This technique creates a positive environment in each student's mind as well as the classroom.

Positive and Helpful Instructor Evaluations- I perform written and verbal assessments through using the Toastmasters Sandwich Style of Evaluation. The technique entails mentioning the positive points of the speech, suggesting some areas for improvement and ending the evaluation on a positive note. This method has proven to be very effective in my classes.

A Potpourri Of Class Exercises

Brainstorming-(an article by Karen Kangas Dwyer, appeared in *Speech Communication Teacher*, Summer 1994). The purpose of this exercise is to give students the opportunity to organize and deliver an impromptu group presentation.

The class is divided into groups of five students. After giving the groups a choice of topics, I inform my students that each person will give a portion of the talk (one student delivers the introduction, one student gives each main point, and one presents the conclusion). Every group receives ten minutes preparation time before delivering their speeches.

This exercise helps reinforce outlining as well as organizing speeches. Furthermore, it gives everybody a chance to meet several fellow students.

Guesstures- Terrific tools to simultaneously entertain and instruct students. In order to enhance the use of gestures, each individual plays a round of the Milton Bradley game "Guesstures" (a word game similar to charades). By the way, prizes are awarded to each student acting out the words and the first person who correctly guesses the word.

Immediately after every student acts out a two word round, the class receives an impromptu speech assignment regarding their pet peeves. I've noticed a significant increase of gestures in speeches throughout this exercise.

Impromptu Speeches-These could consist of a) questions of personal interest/concern (the greatest day of my life, if I could change one thing in the world, etc.); and b) complete the story (a technique learned from Carmen Hunt of El Camino College). After starting the story, I create a cliffhanger and ask another student continue the tale. This student creates a cliffhanger and asks another student to continue the tale. The process continues until my last student completes the story. In addition to providing a speaking opportunity for my students, this exercise forces everybody to listen carefully!

Delivery Cards- (an article by Pamela Hayward, appeared in *Speech Communication Teacher*, Spring 1994). Students are given cards instructing them to perform a particular example of ineffective speech delivery (For example, speaking too fast, avoiding eye contact) in a particular situation (Such as explaining how to register for classes or an exciting moment in sports history). This teaches students the impact of poor delivery on a message.

Drawing Exercise- (from the instructor's manual for Communicating For Results: A guide For Business and the Professions, by Cheryl Hamilton). Students try describing geometric shapes to the class, without the use of gestures. This teaches the importance of effective description and word choice. Furthermore, it affords each student an opportunity to speak to the group on an informal basis.

Yellow Pages Exercise-(an exercise in the book Principles and Types of Speech Communication by Douglas Ehninger et al). Students are instructed to read the Yellow Pages using a particular emotion (anger, fear etc.) and the class guesses that emotion. Students learn how much is conveyed by voice, body, facial expressions etc. and the importance of using these characteristics when delivering a speech.

Vocal Variety Exercise- (from David Greenberg, friend and colleague, as taught in his Speak With Impact Class). Students are given a particular role to play (such as a lottery winner telling how he or she feels). This exercise is designed to help students express emotion as well as utilize vocal variety and gestures.